

Asian - Americans

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History

- Asians began immigrating to US in the mid -1800's.
- Recruited as laborers in mines, factories, farms, railroads, fish.
- Played a vital role in the development of the country.

Categorical Knowledge

- **Lifespan:** For them, family needs are above individual needs. Marriage considered the means to building families. Marriage is of high value. Highest percentage of marriage (65%) and lowest divorce rate (4%). The aging population has a high occurrence for psychological distress and disorders, dementia, cancer. Average life expectancy is 80.7 years old.
- **Spirituality:** Within the Asian culture 74% are affiliated with a religion (Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism).
- **Stressor:** Discrimination due to race or culture, pressure to look up to the model minority stereotype, parental pressure to succeed in academics, family obligations, difficulty balancing two different cultures.
- **Ethnopharmacology:** Need lower doses of meds in general because they are intermediate metabolizers (slower to process), use a lot of herbs, many drug interactions.

Health Care Disparities

- Asian Americans are labeled the “model minority”, their concerns often go untreated.
- Many health disparities such as cancer, heart disease, HTN, diabetes, mental health disorders.
- Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in young Asian American adults (Asian Americans view mental illness as a weakness and are often ashamed to seek help).
- Other health disparities include: cultural/language barrier, limited access to culturally appropriate health care, lack of health care screening, overall stigma surrounding health.

Societal Issues that Affect Health and Nursing Care

- **Language/culture:** Affects in help seeking, making appointments, locating health facility
- **Lack of health insurance:** Very prominent among Asian Americans, due to small business employment or multiple low-wage jobs.
- **Immigrant status:** Illegal immigrant status can play a huge role in affecting nursing care because most of them can't have jobs that offer health insurance.
- **Health literacy:** Affects situations such as understanding labels, appointment slips, health education fliers, complex healthcare systems.

Culturally Competent Nursing Care

- **Familial Risk:** Risk for illness/mental disorders due to the lack of openness in discussing illness, Asian Americans dismissing, denying, or neglecting their symptoms.
- Stigma of carrying diseases that affects their self-esteem and willingness to seek help.
- Seen as “model minority”, however their complaints are dismissed.
- Family pressure to succeed impacts their mental health and well-being.
- **Protective Factors:** Strong ethnic identity, high self esteem - when living in cohesively ethnic communities can prevent depression.
- Strong family connectedness - due to family values, low divorce rate and traditional customs.
- Strong assimilation rate of a minority population into the dominant culture – depending on generation, education, how much they retain from their old culture –leads to a sense of belonging.

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